

CONTRIBUTIONS OF CENTRAL ASIAN NATIONS TO THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORISM

HEARING

BEFORE THE

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AND SOUTH CAUCASUS

OF THE

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2001

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CENTRAL ASIA
AND SOUTH CAUCASUS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 3:22 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Chuck Hagel, presiding.

Present: Senators Hagel and Brownback.

Senator HAGEL. Good afternoon. I am not Senator Torricelli.

We are back in control. There has been a revolution.

No. Senator Torricelli is on the floor of the Senate engaged in a debate over an important amendment that he is the author of and has asked us to proceed under the clear understanding that we shall not order any nominees to be brought forward or do any committee business. And I have given my word. I, of course, cannot speak for Senator Brownback.

Senator BROWNBACK. I have not given mine.

Senator HAGEL. I put up with that all the time. He is from Kansas, you know.

So, we are going to proceed, and Chairman Torricelli will be with us, I am sure, as soon as he is able to extricate himself from his current debate on the floor of the Senate.

Our first witness this afternoon is Assistant Secretary of State, Elizabeth Jones. Secretary Jones is the Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs with a long, distinguished career of service to this country, and she knows a bit about Afghanistan since she served, I believe, as Ambassador. Is that correct?

Ambassador JONES. Served as Ambassador to Kazakhstan, but my first post was Afghanistan.

Senator HAGEL. First post was Afghanistan.

Ambassador JONES. Right.

Senator HAGEL. We are well aware of your credentials and we are grateful that you are here. So, we would like you to proceed. We have another panel coming in behind you, but since there are just two of us here now, I would ask Senator Brownback if he has any opening comments.

Senator BROWNBACK. Just briefly, if I could, Senator Hagel.

Thank you, Ambassador Jones, for being here. I have got an amendment that I am going to have up on the floor, so I am going

to leave right after this. I regret doing that because I am delighted to see this subcommittee formed. I think it is an important one. I am delighted to see this hearing occurring. Congressman Joe Pitts and I have formed a caucus on Central Asia, a bipartisan, bicameral caucus, and I think the whole region has come unto its own as far as our focus.

I applaud the efforts of the administration to do that, I continue to encourage the administration, as we just spoke privately, about doing things that we can to persuade that region to work collectively together. Ambassador Jones is uniquely qualified with her knowledge of Kazakhstan and having been the Ambassador there for a period of time. That is a key country in that region.

I stand ready and willing to work in any way that I can. We will continue to look at legislative issues like the lifting of sanctions on Azerbaijan that occurred earlier this year. We were recently able to provide the administration with waiver authority to do that. I think lifting things like Jackson-Vanik on the Kazakhs would be another issue that we should look at and keep trying to get bit by bit the items from the dam pulled out so that we can have a full flowing relationship back and forth. I do not know if Senator Hagel would join me in that, that we want to do whatever we can to help build this relationship between the United States and Central Asia overall.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Senator HAGEL. Senator Brownback, thank you and thank you for your leadership on these issues over the years.

Secretary Jones.

STATEMENT OF HON. A. ELIZABETH JONES, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador JONES. Thank you very much, Senator Hagel, Senator Brownback. I am extremely happy to be here. Congratulations for forming the subcommittee. All of us are very, very pleased that you have done so because it underscores the importance of this region, an importance that the administration appreciates as well.

I would like to, if you will, offer my testimony for the record. I have lengthy written testimony to outline the fullness of the policy that we are pursuing in Central Asia. I would like to summarize it very briefly orally, if I could, Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Please. And your full statement will be included in the record.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you.

I would like to underscore the importance of Central Asia to the United States. We have been working with the Central Asians for 10 years now, ever since their independence. They are all celebrating their 10th anniversary really right now.

At the moment, we are developing a much more intensive relationship with each of the countries of Central Asia, each of the countries of this part of the world, in recognition of their geostrategic importance to us, but also in recognition of the work that we can do together to improve the situation of each of the countries, to improve the economic prosperity, the democratic principles that these countries adhere to, and to improve their ability

to counter the transnational threats, the international threats that all of us are very much more aware of since September 11.

In the course of the work that we do with each of these countries, we have, of course, focused for the moment on some of the military cooperation that we are able to accomplish with particularly countries that I call the front line states, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, because of their border with Afghanistan. But that is simply an indication of the extent of the relationship that we hope to develop with each of these countries in all of the sectors that are of importance to them and to us, in particular beyond the military, the economic reform, democratic reform, social issues, and adherence to a variety of international organizations and treaties that we think increases their ability to work in the international community and to take their rightful place in the international community ever since their independence.

In particular, I would like to note that Secretary of State Powell was just traveling in the region. He was in Uzbekistan on Saturday, in Kazakhstan on Sunday. He had hoped very much to stop in Kyrgyzstan as well, but because of a very heavy snow storm was unable to do so, but did take the opportunity to telephone President Akayev from the airplane to express his regrets and to talk about a couple of the issues that would have come up in their conversation.

In his conversations with each of the three leaders, he especially thanked them for their support for the international coalition against terrorism, for their specific support in the military campaign in Afghanistan against Osama bin Laden [OBL], against al-Qaeda and against the Taliban, but also to take the opportunity to talk in much greater detail about the importance of the full range of the relationship, about the long-term relationship we expect to have with each of these countries and the work that we expect to do together to promote each of the areas that I mentioned earlier, economic reform, political reform, democracy, human rights, religious freedom, and social issues.

One of the areas that is particularly interesting to all of us, of course, are the natural resources in that region. That was one of the reasons that this area has been interesting for the international community right from the beginning after independence. And Secretary of State Powell was able to use his visit to talk with the leaders, particularly with President Nazarbayev, about the importance of creating a good investment climate for American business, for international business in Kazakhstan, not just in the oil sector but in each of the sectors in which American companies are working.

Of course, behind all of this, one of the issues that is of interest and importance is, so what does Russia think about all of this? Where does Russia fit into the new American relationship with each of these countries in Central Asia? This is an issue that has been discussed many times with the Russian leadership and the American administration. It is an area in which we want to achieve full transparency with the Russians. We explained that we are very much interested in a long-term relationship with these countries, but we do not see this in any way as a zero sum game. This is not an effort by the United States to replace other regional nations or

other regional powers. It is merely an effort to include the United States in the region in the common effort that we all now have undertaken to counter transnational threats and to improve our ability to ensure regional cooperation and to increase the fabric of our relationship with each of these countries.

With that, Senator Hagel, I would like to close my oral remarks and see what questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Jones follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. A. ELIZABETH JONES, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

U.S.-CENTRAL ASIAN COOPERATION

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, it is a distinct honor and privilege to be the first Administration official to testify before this new Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The very fact that it was created testifies to the importance that the United States now accords to this part of the world. I want to report to you about Secretary Powell's visit to Central Asia over this past weekend, and discuss with you the general issues of our rapidly evolving cooperation with the five frontline states. But first, I would like to give you a bit of context for what makes this important part of the world unique.

Background

The five countries of Central Asia emerged only a decade ago from the debris of the Soviet Union. While their ambitions are Western they have far more in common with their Asian neighbors than with traditional Europe.

To the West, Central Asia for centuries has been one of the most inaccessible and least understood parts of the world. In the Middle Ages, great Islamic theologians, philosophers, scientists, and artists were born, flourished, and were buried in Central Asia, mostly in modern-day Uzbekistan. Their scholarship deeply influenced the Renaissance in Europe.

By the late 19th century, however, these squabbling and despotic warlords became vulnerable to colonization by the Russian Empire. At the turn of the 20th century, the Soviet Empire clamped this region in the vise of Stalinism. I do not excuse the current problems and irritants in Central Asia. But when we become impatient, we need to remember the Region's 20th-century history. Major transitions in the basic nature of these regimes may require generational change. We need to be patient and continue to push for reform where it is possible.

We have a vision for this region—that it become stable, peaceful, and prosperous. We have a vision that the individual countries will markedly accelerate their economic reforms and democratic credentials, respect human rights, and develop vibrant civil societies. We have a vision that the countries of this region are increasingly integrated into the global economy via an east-west corridor of cooperation stretching from China and Afghanistan across the Caucasus to the Mediterranean. We share this vision with the well-educated, ambitious, hardworking people of these new countries. We are engaging—seriously and for the long term—with Central Asia.

The Secretary's Visit

Our readiness to engage more intensively was the message that Secretary Powell carried to the region last weekend. Of course, a primary purpose of his visit was to express American appreciation for the Central Asian countries' ongoing critical support for Operation Enduring Freedom. While concentrating on the war effort, however, he explored the full range of cooperation, including the development of genuine pluralism and democracy, rule of law, humanitarian relief, Caspian energy, human rights and economic reform.

The Secretary began in *Uzbekistan*, the most populous Central Asian state. In his meetings with President Karimov, Foreign Minister Kamilov and Defense Minister Gulamov, the Secretary discussed Uzbekistan's role in the war on terrorism, the political future of Afghanistan, and the continued importance of human rights and economic reform. During the Secretary's visit, President Karimov took the important step of announcing the opening of the Friendship Bridge between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan that we expect will soon serve as a critical corridor for humanitarian relief supplies. The Secretary also took the time to meet with an Uzbek NGO emphasizing the importance he places on the development of civil society. I will follow up on the Secretary's visit with a trip to Tashkent early next year to co-chair the

U.S.-Uzbekistan Joint Security Cooperation Consultations. These discussions are intended to define in greater detail the contours of our new and intensified relationship.

The Secretary's second stop was to be the *Kyrgyz Republic*, but nature intervened. Heavy snowfall in Bishkek prevented the Secretary's plane from landing. He did have a long telephone call with President Akayev in which they discussed further counterterrorism cooperation and progress on Kyrgyz efforts to promote further democratic reform. Facing daunting obstacles, the Kyrgyz leadership early on embraced democratic and economic reforms. After backsliding, the country is returning to the road to reform.

The Secretary's final stop in Central Asia was *Kazakhstan*, the state with the largest territory and the most economic potential in the region. Stable, multi-ethnic, and nuclear-free, Kazakhstan is likely to become one of the top five oil producers in the world by 2010. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development judged it the leading economic reformer of the former Soviet Union. U.S. investment exceeds \$5 billion, and is growing.

The Secretary's talks with President Nazarbayev and Foreign Minister Idrisov focused on the need for further competition and transparency in energy development, deeper development of democracy and respect for human rights, and Kazakhstan's potential role in Afghan reconstruction. The Secretary also discussed with President Nazarbayev his visit to Washington later this month.

While in Astana, he met with members of the American Chamber of Commerce to reinforce the message that we are working with Central Asian governments to make sure that the region is a profitable place for U.S. business and investment.

Our New Vision for Central Asia

Secretary Powell's visit to the region was a rousing success. He received a gratifying level of support and cooperation from our Central Asian partners. This is yet another sign of how the world has changed after September 11. And it underlines that our foreign policy must evolve to keep pace with this change.

The stakes are undeniably high in Central Asia. In what only a decade ago was the Soviet Union, the United States now has thousands of U.S. military personnel working alongside their Central Asian counterparts. We rely on these governments for the security and well-being of our troops, and for vital intelligence that has helped us to conduct such an effective military campaign in Afghanistan.

The frontline states of the region provide a critical humanitarian corridor for food and emergency supplies that may save the lives of millions of people living in northern Afghanistan this winter. We will want the rising tide of reconstruction in Afghanistan to lift the Central Asian boats, too. We would like to see post-war reconstruction supplies and materials purchased, to the extent possible, in neighboring countries to buoy their economies.

Our country is now linked with this region in ways we could never have imagined before September 11. Our policy in Central Asia must include a commitment to deeper, more sustained, and better-coordinated engagement on the full range of issues upon which we agree and disagree. These include security cooperation, energy, and internal strengthening of these countries through political and economic reform. President Bush has invited both the presidents of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to Washington in the coming months as the centerpiece of this intensified engagement.

We have told the leaders of these countries that America will not forget in the future those who stand by us now. After this conflict is over, we will not abandon Central Asia. We are committed to providing the resources, the high-level attention, and the multinational coordination to support reform opportunities. We want to stand by the Central Asian countries in their struggle to reform their societies in the same way they have stood by us in the war on terrorism. This is not only a new relationship, but a long-term relationship.

This will require resources that must be tailored to each country. Uzbekistan has asked for guidance and support in its dealings with the International Monetary Fund and other international financial organizations. Kazakhstan needs more foreign investment and support for local private-sector development. Turkmenistan may need support for the development of grass roots organizations. Kyrgyzstan needs help with its debt burden. Tajikistan, the poorest state in the region and still recovering from civil war and drought, will need a broad range of humanitarian, economic, and political assistance. In all five countries, we need to expand our ongoing support for democratic political institutions, local non-governmental organizations, and independent media. We are ready to explore new areas of assistance for all five states, but only in exchange for demonstrated, concrete steps toward reform.

Promoting reform in Central Asia has not been easy. Today we are concentrating much of our assistance on programs that seek to educate and inspire the next generation of leaders in the region. You know these initiatives well. They include the high school-level FLEX program, Freedom Support Act program at the university level, and the graduate-level Muskie program. Further, the IREX exchange program targets young professionals, and the Peace Corps has a broad range of programs for the next generation. These programs look to the future by concentrating on the successor generations, and they are an integral part of our long-term commitment to Central Asia.

Promoting Longer-Term U.S. Interests

In addition to wanting these countries to become stable and prosperous, we have three significant U.S. national interests in the region: preventing the spread of terrorism, providing tools for political and economic reform and institution of the rule of law, and ensuring the security and transparent development of Caspian energy reserves.

The *terrorist threat* emanating from Afghanistan reinforces our view that underdevelopment and repressive, anti-democratic regimes provide conditions that terrorists and other extremists exploit. We have been working on counterterrorism with states in the region, but we must do more in parallel with our emphasis on respect for human rights. Since the announcement of the Central Asian Border Security Initiative in April 2000, the USG has committed \$70 million for customs and border-guard training, anti-terrorism assistance, and communication, observation and detection equipment. These programs have been well-received. They have developed the basis for cooperation upon which we have built our current joint efforts in Operation Enduring Freedom. But I want to emphasize that our many efforts at promoting human rights, democracy and economic development are every bit as important as our security assistance in dealing with the long-term root causes of terrorism.

An inextricable component of a more secure and prosperous Central Asia is *an investment and legal climate* that will both fuel local economic development and protect the interests of U.S. traders and investors. Property rights, privatization, due process, rule of law, currency convertibility, bank and tax reform all contribute to the security of investments and individuals in Central Asia—the foundation of a stable economy and just society. We are investing heavily in efforts to promote this kind of reform throughout the region.

Development of the vast *Caspian* energy reserves and their reliable export to global markets will in large part determine the ability of Central Asia to achieve economic independence and improve the standard of living of its citizens. Ensuring this autonomy for the Caspian states, as well as diversifying global energy supplies and creating opportunities for U.S. expertise and investment, make the development of Caspian energy an important U.S. interest as well. Our policy in this area has focused on enabling these states to develop multiple and reliable transport corridors for delivery of these resources to global markets.

Currently these hydrocarbon resources reach the West via pipelines that transit Russia. We seek to broaden export options for the countries of Central Asia and the companies operating there. Our objective is therefore anti-monopoly but not anti-Russian. We have supported and facilitated the efforts of Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia to reach agreement with private companies to build pipelines from the Caspian Sea across the Caucasus to Turkey. I am proud to say that construction of the landmark Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline will begin this summer and will bring oil to world markets in 2005. The Shah Deniz gas pipeline, paralleling BTC, is also on track. I am also pleased that the Caspian Pipeline Consortium or CPC Pipeline is also now officially operating. This pipeline, which links Kazakhstan to global markets via Russia, underscores the desire to work in partnership with the former Soviet nations, developing Caspian energy.

A New Partnership with Russia

One of the most remarkable developments of the last three months has been our extraordinary cooperation with Russia in a region that was formerly part of the Soviet Union and that Russia naturally regards as its own backyard.

On October 19, we conducted our first-ever United States-Russia consultations on Central Asia. We were both pleasantly surprised and gratified by the convergence of interests in this region. We both desire long-term stability and prosperity in Central Asia, where we both have important interests. And we have pledged transparency and collaboration. Secretary Powell's conversations in Central Asia and Moscow over the past few days were part of this new effort, and demonstrate their

need by no tension between our support for the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian states and our desire for broader and deeper cooperation with Russia.

Presidents Bush and Putin are leading our countries to a new level of cooperation in many spheres, including in Central Asia. President Putin has shown noteworthy leadership in the way he has actively coordinated with Central Asian leaders to encourage their cooperation with the United States in the battle against terrorism. This supports what we have long said: that Central Asia is not a zero-sum game. We have no desire to replay the nineteenth century "Great Game" in the twenty-first. We have offered support to efforts by Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan to foster a new Caspian Sea delimitation scheme, as long as these efforts do not hinder the future transport of energy resources. Our shared interests with Russia indeed, with the other regional powers of China, Turkey and even Iran—are greater than our areas of competition.

A Partnership with the Congress

The role of the Congress, and in particular this Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will be vital as we invigorate our relations with Central Asia. As the former United States Ambassador to Kazakhstan, I have seen firsthand that the leaders in this region really do want an active dialogue with the United States and especially with members of Congress. I would certainly welcome more members of Congress visiting Central Asia, but particularly members of this Subcommittee. The Administration values your input and suggestions as we move forward with this region. It is for that reason that I am particularly grateful for your invitation to share perspectives today.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you very much.

You alluded to this in your remarks, but would you define a little more fully what, in your opinion, are our longer-term objectives for Central Asia? You talked about some of the countries specifically, stability, some of the generally agreed upon principles, but defining that down deeper, how do we do that? Obviously we are dealing now and will continue to be confronted with economic reconstruction of the Central Asian nations. What role should they play? How can they play? Take that as far you would like.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you. I would be glad to do that.

The relationship that we have been working on with each of these countries for the past 10 years and which we would like now to reinvigorate is, as I mentioned, a very, very broad one. And the reason for that is that these are countries that have immense natural resources, but more importantly, they have immense personal resources. They have immense resources in terms of the people who live there and the contributions they can make to the international community. These are countries in which the education level is extremely high. That is one of the very positive legacies of the Soviet Union. It is an area in which people have great aspirations for determining their own destiny. They have not had a good understanding of what democracy means. They do not have a good understanding of what responsibility within a democratic state means and how one exercises that.

So, the challenge that we have had over the past 10 years, which we are really working on to energize now, is to work with each of these countries to try to enhance their ability to work on the international stage in the economic sphere and the political sphere and the social sphere and the military sphere.

We do that through, for instance, on the economic side working closely with finance experts on bank reform. How do you have a national banking system that fits into the international banking system? How do you have free flow of finances with accountability and with transparency? What kind of tax system would work with

that kind of banking system? What kind of stock exchange does one have if one wants to have a transparent, free market economic system in the country?

So, the kind of assistance that we provide and that we intend to continue to provide in specific areas is very targeted. It is very focused on technical assistance because, as I say, after all, we are dealing with highly educated, highly motivated people in each of these countries.

One of the difficulties we face, though, is as we work with each of these countries to put in place the tax system that makes the most sense there or the privatization system that would work best to transform this heavily state-controlled economy into a market-based private economy is that there are still interests that make it more difficult to assure that full transparency can be accomplished and that full government control, shall we say, of the correct way to do things can be put into place. What I am trying to say is corruption is a big problem. And it is another area in which we try to work on in terms of legislative reform to develop the kinds of laws and regulations that close down the loopholes or close down the possibilities for corruption to be possible in each of these countries, as well as to work with international NGO's, like Transparency International, to develop internal systems that people in the region and the countries themselves would like to see instituted.

On the social and educational side, we have found that the exchange programs that have been underway for some time are extremely successful. That is probably the single most successful program that we have in this part of the world, the FLEX students, the Fulbright students, Fulbright professors, the Bradley students. There are all kinds of exchanges at the high school level, the university level, and the post-graduate professional level that we find are the very, very best way to introduce the people of this region to the kinds of intellectual principles, the kinds of democratic principles, economic reform kinds of ideas that we think are very important, in other words, the values that we hold close.

On the military side, the military cooperation that we have undertaken with these countries has been very much focused on developing these countries' ability to defend themselves, so we have done a lot of work on border controls, which gets to the heart of how to make sure that we have the right kind of counternarcotics programs in each of these countries, how to make sure that there are the right kind of immigration and border controls in these countries that allow them to prevent the influx of terrorists or people who are smuggling nuclear materials or weapons of mass destruction elements and that kind of thing. Our border control work has not been sufficient in our view, so we are building that up, particularly in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, which have been the most porous borders in terms of threats coming out of Afghanistan.

Also in the military-to-military work that we have done, we have done a lot of training on how to institute civilian control over the military, training programs that introduce to members of the parliament, how do you look at a military budget and work with senior officers in the military on how you develop a budget that can be and should be scrutinized by a parliament. What are your respon-

sibilities to the people, to the parliament in terms of being transparent about what kind of military you have and what kind of budget you are putting forward. These are all new concepts, and it has been very interesting to work with each of these governments and their militaries and the parliament in how you start doing these kinds of things.

On the social side, we have done a lot of work on privatizing medicine, on privatizing pharmacies, on specific work to go after preventive medicine rather than the old Soviet system which focused very much on curing diseases but almost no resources on preventing. So, there has been a lot of work done on what we call social marketing, how do you get out information to the public on how do you eat right to prevent heart disease, what does cause heart disease? What about tuberculosis? What is the problem? How do you know when people around you have tuberculosis? Information and training on the connection between tuberculosis and AIDS. USAID has had some very successful programs there. They have been pilot projects and many of them have been taken over by the World Health Organization because they have been considered to be so good and used in more parts of each of these countries.

A fundamental effort that we have underway, though, that we really need to do more work on, as Senator Brownback mentioned, is we would like to work to promote greater regional cooperation among each of these countries. Each one of them has developed slightly differently from the other. Each one has differentiated themselves from the other. Even though they all started out pretty much the same 10 years ago, they have each developed their own personality, their own nationality, and that has not always been the best for regional cooperation. We would like to promote that. We would like to see if there are not ways that resources in one country can be leveraged for resources in another. For example, it seems to us that there is more than can be done when Kazakhstan has so much coal, Kyrgystan needs coal, Kyrgystan has water, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan need water. There must be something more that can be done there to develop better cooperation in those kinds of resources.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

How would you rate the Iranian contribution to our efforts in Afghanistan and generally over the last 3 months our efforts, our allies' efforts to develop some stability in Central Asia as we are conducting the military operation in Afghanistan?

Ambassador JONES. I hope my colleague in the Middle East Bureau will not be concerned about my answer since it is not really my area.

Senator HAGEL. No, they will not be. It is all right.

Ambassador JONES. The Iranian reaction I think we have found interesting. They seem to be as concerned about terrorism as the rest of the international community. They have done some very good work with refugees coming out of Afghanistan. That has been an area where there has been some international cooperation that we have participated in.

On the political side, I hesitate to speak about it because I am not fully enough current with how that has been developing. So, I

will ask my colleague, Ambassador Burns, to respond to you on that, if I may.

Senator HAGEL. If he ever comes home.

Ambassador JONES. If he ever comes home.

Senator HAGEL. I know this is a bit out of the general geographical area that you are talking about today, but as you note in your comments and as you noted in your testimony, it all does connect. Russia. Short-term, long-term interests in this area. Obviously, they are developing a new center of gravity as a result of what they have been through the last 10 years. I would be interested in your thoughts about their role, their involvement, their cooperation, their activities now in Central Asia.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you. I would like to do that very much.

Deputy Secretary Armitage led sort of an emergency session of the U.S.-Russia-Afghan working group right after September 11. I think we were in Moscow the following week for an emergency session of this working group, specifically to talk about how we might concert to work together on the terrorism problem, particularly in Afghanistan. Of course, in the course of those discussions, we spent a lot of time talking about Central Asia and have continued that discussion at successive working group sessions. Of course, Secretary of State Powell has discussed that many, many times with Foreign Minister Ivanov.

The fundamental point that we make to the Russians is, as I mentioned, that we do not see this as a zero sum game in the region. We very much welcome and appreciate the cooperation and joint sense of purpose that we have been able to develop with Russia about Afghanistan over the past 3 months since the terrible events on September 11. The Russians see Afghanistan as having been the source of threat to them from terrorism and from narcotics especially but also from other kinds of smuggling, particularly dangerous smuggling in weapons of mass destruction components. So, we have been able to have extremely productive, collegial discussions with the Russians constantly, especially since September 11, on how we might work together on counternarcotics issues, on terrorism issues in Afghanistan, but also as these threats might seep through Central Asia.

So, we have undertaken to have a very transparent discussion with the Russians about the programs that we have underway in Central Asia with the Central Asians to get at exactly those threats. It is really an extremely productive, very collegial discussion, the tone of which is based on what more can we do together to make sure that these threats go away as much as we can make them go away.

Senator HAGEL. A country that you do know an awful lot about, Kazakhstan. What is your evaluation of their contributions to our efforts over the last 3 months in Afghanistan?

Ambassador JONES. Kazakhstan made a very strong public statement, right from the beginning, of support for the United States and for the coalition against terrorism. They have offered military assistance, overflight, that kind thing. They have offered bases for our use. We have not taken them up on that offer. They have a lot of wheat for sale. They have a lot of wheat to contribute to the hu-

manitarian operation in Afghanistan, and the World Food Program has taken them up on that. So, most of the wheat going into Uzbekistan now comes from Kazakhstan.

In our discussions on Sunday with President Nazarbayev and his team, the level of support was again offered very enthusiastically, a very high level of support. It gives us a platform from which to enhance our ability to work with them and their ability to work with us on border control issues, on transparency issues. Secretary of State Powell was able to make the point that one of the benefits of the deepened and more integrated relationship we have with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan and some of the others is that we are able to talk much more frankly and much more often about all of the issues that concern us and that are imperative for these countries to resolve and improve on in order to assure their own stability.

He was able to make the case that without a fundamental ability of citizens to vote and the fundamental ability of citizens to choose their leaders and to determine their fate, without a fundamental ability of the people of these countries to have jobs, to work and to be prosperous and to choose their work, that stability will always be out of reach. He was able to make that point very clearly and very persuasively both in Kazakhstan and in Uzbekistan.

Senator HAGEL. You touched, I think a couple of times, on the issue of drugs and the challenge that presents to all these governments and these societies. Would you develop that a little more fully? Obviously, what we are doing in Afghanistan has had a very significant impact on the drug trade there. Are we pushing it out and across the borders into these other countries or what are the consequences of this issue?

Ambassador JONES. Absolutely. We hope that the consequences will be extensive, that we, the international community, will be able to work with the Afghan authority, as it develops and as it is replaced through a vote, to end the poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. That, after all, has been a terrible thing for the countries of the region. It has been terrible for Pakistan, not to mention Afghanistan. The leaders in Central Asia worry about increased addiction among their population. They worry about the corruption on the borders that drug trafficking involves. They want very much to work with the U.N. and with other international organizations, as I say, to end poppy cultivation and to clamp down on their borders to be able to prevent trafficking.

Senator HAGEL. I understand that Dr. Hill who is going to testify in the second panel says in her testimony—and I quote—“Uzbekistan is a source of regional tension rather than stability.” You do not agree with that, I assume. Or do you agree with that?

Ambassador JONES. Uzbekistan is a source of regional tension?

Senator HAGEL. If I read this right. We will have Dr. Hill up here soon. I have not read her testimony, but our alert, brilliant staff have given me this, so it is their fault if they have misquoted her. If that quote is correct, would you respond to that? Do you believe Uzbekistan is a source of regional tension rather than stability?

Ambassador JONES. I do not believe Uzbekistan is a source of regional tension. I believe that the international movement against

Uzbekistan, the IMU, is a source of tension. That is a terrorist organization. It is an organization we label as a terrorist organization that works out of Afghanistan, whose primary goal is the overthrow of the Uzbek Government and the transformation of that government into an Islamic state. But I would not say that Uzbekistan itself is a source of regional tension, no.

Senator HAGEL. Well, when Dr. Hill gets up to talk, we can develop that a little more fully.

Pakistan. What is your assessment of not only their contributions but of what is ahead for Pakistan diplomatically, militarily, economically? Obviously, the concerns that we have had and continue to play out with their differences with India are significant and probably are not going to go away anytime soon.

Ambassador JONES. President Musharraf I know has been a staunch supporter of the coalition. We are extremely pleased with the cooperation that we have received from him which we believe, of course, he is doing in his own interest. But, again, if I get much further, I am going to get in trouble with another Assistant Secretary, Christina Rocca, since that is one of hers, not mine.

Senator HAGEL. She was up here, as you know, and she will not mind.

But I think you cannot come up here and talk about Central Asia and just stop at the borders. I think you understand that and that is why you are getting the questions you are. It does not work that way and you know that. So, go ahead.

Ambassador JONES. I was fortunate enough to be able to serve in Pakistan for 4 years, and developed a very clear appreciation for the difficulties that the Pakistani leadership sees for itself in the way the social issues in its country have developed. Certainly President Musharraf is doing his best to get at those social issues. When there is quiet in Afghanistan—and we certainly trust that there will be—and when there is a government in Afghanistan that adheres to the international values that the interim group has certainly subscribed to in the Bonn agreement, I am sure that President Musharraf will be much relieved and will be able to focus much more on development and improvement of the social conditions in his own country, particularly when he no longer has to expend so many national resources on the care of so many hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees in his country. Many, many thousands are going back every day now, as they are going back from Iran.

With your indulgence, I would like not to try to comment on the Pakistan-Indian relationship. I regret I have not kept up with it in the intimate detail that I know that Assistant Secretary Rocca has.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I will trade you then. We will talk about the ABM decision here in a minute.

Ambassador JONES. All right.

Senator HAGEL. Turkmenistan. We have not given much focus to Turkmenistan here this afternoon. Are they not as involved, or what contributions would we say Turkmenistan has made?

Ambassador JONES. Turkmenistan is not quite as involved. They certainly have been very involved in being a staging ground for humanitarian goods to go across into Afghanistan. They have provided the kind of overflight and the military assistance that we

have needed from them in order to prosecute the war against al-Qaeda and OBL in Afghanistan. They have been very cooperative and helpful there without any question. They have a very long border with Afghanistan, so their willingness to open their borders early to humanitarian assistance going across was really very, very welcome by us and by the rest of the international community and NGO's working in that region.

The leadership of Turkmenistan has a very particular way that they like to think of themselves and think of the rest of the world. So, our relationship is not as broad there as it could be. We would like very much to do more work with the Turkmen. We have tried in the past to work with them in terms of energy transportation across the Caspian, but they really do not want to pursue that in the way that we think is the most commercially viable. So, we have not been able to make as much advancement there as we would have liked to.

Senator HAGEL. I mentioned ABM and, of course, that has been much of the topic today. Realizing I know what you may well say, that is not in your portfolio, but you have lived in Central Asia, you have lived in a very dangerous part of the world that has splashed over into—when you started your career, it was the Soviet Union. I would be interested in your thoughts on the Russian response today to ABM, what effects it may or may not have on our relationship with Russia in our joint efforts working together in Central Asia.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you. I actually very much welcome the opportunity to talk about the latest on the ABM Treaty.

We were very pleased to see President Putin's response to President Bush's announcement this morning that we have given notification. He, of course, knew we had given notification. We gave it earlier today and have talked with him about it previously. As he said, he was not surprised by this, although he was disappointed.

At the same time, he has focused on, as we have, the importance of reducing offensive nuclear weapons, and we were very pleased that he has also announced the range to which he would like to reduce his offensive nuclear weapons, 1,500 to 2,200. He has also said that he would like to work with us—and we have said the same thing—to somehow codify the U.S. statement of the level to which the United States would like to reduce its offensive nuclear weapons and the level to which the Russians would in some kind of an agreement that might be signed when President Bush visits Russia toward the middle of next year.

At the same time, I think the important thing is that the Russians, as President Putin said, do not see this as being a threat to their security. They have done their own evaluation and do not see this as threatening. They look forward to working with us on developing some kind of an agreement to codify the reduction in offensive weapons, and they do not see this as any way an instigation for an arms race. We have had really extremely productive, very detailed discussions with the Russians over the past couple of months since the President first met with President Putin in Nybdana through Genoa, through Shanghai and then in Washington and Crawford to discuss all aspects of the ABM Treaty of how we might handle the ABM Treaty together, recognizing that

it is a relic of the cold war, recognizing that the purpose of the ABM Treaty was really to codify a dangerous relationship between Russia and the United States that absolutely no longer exists. We no longer see Russia as the enemy. We certainly do not see it as a threat, and we would like to find ways to move forward on international missile defense as well.

President Putin was clear, though, that he would have preferred the United States not leave the treaty before there was something else in place. The testing program that President Bush has determined he would like to pursue does not permit that, and so he made the decision that it was time to give notice under article 15 that we would be leaving the treaty in 6 months. That said, I know we will all be working very hard to try to work toward the codification of the fundamental decisions that have already been made on reducing offensive weapons by both sides.

Senator HAGEL. So, you would not see this as any inhibiting dynamic of the Russians and the Americans and others working together in trying to bring stability to Central Asia.

Ambassador JONES. Absolutely not. One of the things that has developed in the relationship between President Putin and President Bush and that we have worked on more institutionally is the number of areas in which we have very broad agreement and the number of areas in which we wish to have greater cooperation. Of course, Central Asia was one of those topics. But beyond that, we have been doing a tremendous amount of work to support Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization. We have been doing a tremendous amount of work with the Russians to improve the investment climate there. We are working on educational exchanges. We are working on ways to enhance the ability of independent media to work productively and effectively in Russia, and of course, we only a week ago pledged to work with Russia on a NATO relationship that would permit us to discuss with Russia various issues of interest to the NATO alliance and to Russia.

Senator HAGEL. In the interest of time, I understand we may have a vote at 4 o'clock, and we have another panel. But I would, if I could, Secretary Jones, ask you one last question. This came up last week when your colleagues were up here.

The temporary governing body of Afghanistan that was produced in Bonn a week ago, the 30-member temporary coalition government, what is your sense of that, not just the process but what they have done, the likelihood of further stabilizing Central Asia, anything that you would like to comment on.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you. I think what these Afghan leaders did in Bonn is nothing short of phenomenal. They clearly have decided that they have had way too much of war. They clearly have decided that it is time for all the communities in Afghanistan to work together—they have been trying—and to bring peace to Afghanistan.

Certainly the support of the international community is imperative to assure that reconstruction funding can be done in the way that it absolutely must be done in order to make it possible for Afghans who have been bearing arms for so many years to have jobs, to have gainful employment when they are no longer going to be paid for fighting.

The reconstruction effort that we have underway in Afghanistan we hope will also, as we say, float the boats of the Central Asians. It cannot help but have a regional effect for Afghanistan to no longer be a pariah state, to be a state that generates terrorism, that generates narcotics, that generates destabilizing factors. It cannot help but make it much easier for each of these countries to find a way to work together regionally. It is something we want very much to promote, and it is something that each of the leaders in Central Asia mentioned to Secretary of State Powell on our recent trip, how much they want to participate in Afghan reconstruction and they see the benefit flowing from Afghanistan to their own countries.

Senator HAGEL. Madam Secretary, is there anything else you would like to add?

Ambassador JONES. No, thank you, Senator. I wanted to say again how much I appreciate the formation of the subcommittee. I look forward to many more discussions like this. Thank you very much.

Senator HAGEL. Well, thank you. I too believe—I think we all do on this committee—that it was a very wise decision to put a particularly strong emphasis and focus on what is going on over there. It will give us certainly more depth here to be able to spend more time on the area of the world that you now have some responsibility for. Thank you very, very much.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you. I look forward to hosting you in the region too. I know our embassies would like very much to see all of you join them out there.

Senator HAGEL. Well, some of us are actually going over there fairly soon. So, we may see you sooner than maybe you would like.

Ambassador JONES. Oh, no. Anytime is great.

Senator HAGEL. Nonetheless, I think we are going to be traveling.

I am sorry that you had to deal with the B team here today. The A team had other things, obviously, involved in farm policy, which is not a passing interest of mine. But, nonetheless, I am grateful that you would come up, as is the committee.

Ambassador JONES. Absolutely. Anytime.

Senator HAGEL. We wish you much success. Thank you for your service.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HAGEL. Why do we not go ahead and start the second panel. And then if we have to recess the second panel, we will recess to go vote and come back. So, if our witnesses for the second panel, Dr. Starr and Dr. Hill, would come up, the infamous, much quoted Dr. Hill. I apologize for this bizarre process that you are participating in, but if you have testified before, you know it is fairly standard procedure. So, thank you both for coming forward, and we are grateful that you would take some time to share your thoughts with us today.

As I said, we are supposed to have a vote at 4, but it is now 5 after. So, we will continue and get as much done as we can before we would recess for a vote.

So, let me begin by introducing S. Frederick Starr, chairman, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Johns Hopkins University, and

our next witness after Dr. Starr will be Dr. Fiona Hill who is a fellow, Foreign Policy Studies Program, The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC. As I said, we have already been introduced to Dr. Hill through my quoting incorrectly or correctly from her testimony. So, thank you again, and Dr. Starr, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF S. FREDERICK STARR, CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL ASIA-CAUCASUS INSTITUTE, NITZE SCHOOL OF ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. STARR. Thank you very much. I want to add congratulations, Senator Hagel, to your entire subcommittee on its existence. Up until very recently there was no map available in the U.S. Government that put this region at the center. It was always an appendage of something else. I noticed in the previous discussion this afternoon I stopped counting the mentions of Russia at 18. There was no mention of China. There was no mention of Turkey. This subsumed this region under other headings. The existence of your subcommittee marks the beginning, let us hope, of a policy on this area as such.

I think we might note that the past 10 years we have gone through phases of euphoria and deep gloom about every country in the region. We are continually assigning them white hats or black hats or shifting the hats according to the fashion in Washington. It seems to me this represents the product of not having a real policy, a really long-term one, and that is what I want to just take a few minutes to speak about. I address it in more detail in my paper.

The region itself is expanding with the reentry of Afghanistan on to the scene where it was historically, but the military phase of this operation will, at a certain point, be over. The question then will be, what do we do with regard to Central Asia?

Now, what we do not do is walk away again. But acknowledging that, what do we do? And I would submit that the basic truth upon which any security policy in this whole region is going to be built is that no single country or pair of countries or small grouping of countries can provide an adequate security environment for Central Asia. What I am saying is that the long-term presence in the region of either American troops or Russian troops, alone or together, will not advance the security of Central Asia, nor will any other combination of outside forces achieve this. This means that we should stay not permanently, but long enough to preside over the creation of some solid security conditions in the region. Now, what does that mean?

If no single country can provide a security umbrella for Central Asia or even pair of countries, the only workable long-term security structure would be one in which all foreign troops are withdrawn from the region. The principle should be very simply we will withdraw our troops from Central Asia, but you must do the same or not introduce your forces if they are not there now. The result will be a Central Asia and, let us hope, Afghanistan without foreign troops.

Now, how do you get to that situation? You do it through a process of dialog based on the fact that we have been there and we

have been addressing the No. 1 security priority of every country in the region and Russia. We should not be treating this as a deal in which we should offer some payment for their cooperation because we have been addressing their No. 1 problem, including Russia's. There we should just as reasonably be asking what payment comes from the other direction.

Now, my point is very simply we will be in a position where the United States can, through a multilateral process of dialog, create a demilitarized Central Asia in which none of the four nuclear powers who surround it or one possible future nuclear power and Turkey and NATO power, in which none of these countries would attempt to control or dominate the region, in which all of them would understand that we will restrain ourselves if you all do the same, as well as the United States. This is nobody's first choice. Everyone would like a dominant voice. It is everybody's second choice, and I think we can bring it about.

If that happens, we can then move reasonably to address political issues in the region. If the security threats of Islamic radicalism, terrorism, and drugs have been the rationale for many suppressions of democratic reform, the retarding of progress in the economic area, if this has justified the suppression of human rights, then our addressing the big security environment creates conditions under which we can reasonably open up a dialog about political betterment.

Now, that finally will not work unless there is something happening on the economic side, and that is underway. More is needed but not in the form of aid. It is simply opening markets and trade opportunities to the south, particularly to the port of Karachi. That will all happen.

My point is this. The United States needs a long-term strategy. We do not have a long-term strategy. We can no longer talk about this as—how many references did we hear in the previous testimony to a zero sum game with Russia. Not one mention of China, whose interests in the region are at least as great as Russia's and growing much faster. The other neighbors all have serious interests in it. It is everybody's back yard.

We can avert a dangerous security situation in this region by moving toward a general demilitarization, the exclusion of foreign forces from the entire region, the creation of a process of dialog with all the neighbors, in which we would participate, in which everyone would understand the basis for mutual self-restraint. That creates the necessary preconditions for political betterment, improvement of human rights, and the development of the economies.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Starr follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF S. FREDERICK STARR, CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL ASIA-CAUCASUS INSTITUTE, NITZE SCHOOL OF ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM AND U.S. BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE NATIONS OF CENTRAL ASIA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: Ten years ago there was not a single map in the U.S. Government that placed Central Asia at the center of anything. Either it was on the southern edge of the so-called "former Soviet Union," the far west of Asia, or the extreme east of the Middle East. Your sub-committee,

established before September 11, marks the U.S.'s acceptance of an important reality, namely, that this region, surrounded by four nuclear powers (and perhaps, soon, a fifth) and a NATO member, is important in its own right. We should not consider it an appendage of anything else, or any one country's "backyard."

Thanks to Soviet rule, Central Asia boasts one of the most literate and numerate Muslim populations anywhere, and is ruled by secular governments. Due also to Soviet rule, nearly two fifths of its native peoples died in savage collectivization. The rest were left with a heritage of authoritarianism, corruption, and disrespect for law and human rights that persists to this day.

In these respects the states of Central Asia mirror the fates of Russia, Ukraine, and other countries formerly ruled from Moscow. We are only gradually coming to appreciate the seriousness of the birth defects present in all the post-Soviet states. It is important that we recognize this, and apply the same standards and extend the same patience to all, rather than selectively, according to who happens to be in favor in Washington at the moment. Bluntly, we cannot nod at authoritarianism in Moscow and preach against it in Central Asia.

For all their shortcomings, no Central Asian state has suffered the collapse of health and the shortening of human life that we have seen in Russia, nor the government's callous disregard of these conditions. Several Central Asian states, including Uzbekistan, invest more heavily in education than Russia, and bravely send thousands of their young people abroad to acquire modern and western ways that must eventually clash with current realities at home.

Ten years of independence is a very short time. In 1786 the U.S. had no Supreme Court, slavery existed even in parts of the North, women were excluded from citizenship, and one of the models for the White House included a throne room.

Let your sub-committee therefore approach its work with a long and strategic view, with both tenacity and patience, and in the confidence that by addressing the specific needs of this region the United States will at the same time advance the values for which this country stands.

Insecurity and Risk for the Central Asians and the U.S.

There exists a fundamental misunderstanding about the relationship of Central Asian states (and Russia, for that matter) to the war on terrorism. We hear about their "cooperation with the U.S.," as if they are doing us a favor that should be rewarded. Nothing could be further from the truth. For a decade, the Central Asian states have faced the threat of Islamic radicalism, terrorism, and drug trafficking, with which the first two are closely linked. All of the Central Asian states have identified these issues as their main security threat, and Afghanistan as the locus of that threat. So has Russia, which has used the issue to justify the stationing of troops in four of the five countries of the region.

To address this threat, Central Asian governments have arrested countless suspects, abrogating the civil rights of many who are doubtless innocent. All of the countries have resorted to the same primitive policies, the differences among them being only of degree, not of kind.

Some commentators have argued that these measures are largely responsible for the growth of terrorism in the first place. There is some truth in this, but we must be careful in levying this charge. When we demand that Messers, Musharraf, Arafat, or Mubarrak crack down hard on jihadist groups, Palestinian terrorists, or Muslim brotherhoods, are we not asking them to do exactly what we criticize Central Asian governments for doing? Americans bridle when our critics abroad blame September 11 on the U.S.' actions, yet we come close to doing the same thing with respect to the Central Asians.

Both the Central Asians and the Russians, who have claimed a special role in the region, have been notably unsuccessful in their campaigns against terrorism. But now the situation is changing, thanks to the United States. We are risking American soldiers' lives and expending billions of our citizens' resources to address a threat that hangs over their countries as much as ours. The fact that we have our own interests at heart in no way qualifies this truth. Early signs of progress in the war on terrorism already exceed what has been accomplished locally in a decade.

And so let us cease all talk of some payment owed Central Asians (or Russians) for their cooperation. If anything, it is they who should thank us.

However, this does not mean that U.S. actions are without risk to the Central Asian states. Quite the contrary. For a decade they have faced not only the dangers arising from Afghanistan but also the constant threat posed by certain groups in Russia, notably the military and security forces, who are not yet reconciled to the loss of empire. This "Imperial hangover" is not unique to Russia. France exhibited the same tendencies in Algeria, the Spanish in Cuba and Chile, and the British when they burned the White House in 1812. This imperial hangover will eventually

pass, but for the time being it remains a threat. It means that the Central Asians, after cooperating with the U.S., will inevitably face redoubled pressure from Russia if we leave abruptly and without attending to the long-term security needs of the region. That we have looked kindly into Mr. Putin's soul does not change this reality.

The Central Asians face a similar danger with respect to our efforts in Afghanistan. Some Americans hold that we should destroy Bin Laden, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban and then leave the post-war stabilization and reconstruction to others. Such a course runs the danger of condemning all Central Asia to further waves of instability from the South. But in the next round it will not only be Russia that is tempted to throw its weight around in the region but possibly China, or even Iran or India. All have as much right to claim Central Asia as their "backyard" as Russia has had until now. Central Asia may be a distant region but when these nuclear powers begin bumping heads there it will create terrifying threats to world peace that the U.S. cannot ignore.

A Three-Pronged U.S. Strategy for Post-War Central Asia

This prospect, along with the unresolved problem of Russia's imperial hangover, is the reality that the Central Asian states must face if the U.S. precipitously withdraws from their region once the military campaign has achieved its goals. It requires that the United States develop and implement a longer-term strategy for regional security in Central Asia of a sort which, until this moment, has existed only in fragmentary form, if at all. Such a strategy is essential for the viability and sustainability of the states of Central Asia. No less, it is essential for the United States' own long-term interest in helping build a stable world.

What, then, are the elements of such a post-war strategy for Central Asia? The question demands the most serious attention of this sub-committee and of the American government as a whole. At the risk of simplification, I would suggest that it must contain three elements, pertaining to (1) security, (2) politics, and (3) economics.

Security: An International Concert

The basic truth upon which any security policy for Central Asia must be grounded is that *no single country, or pair of countries, can provide an adequate security environment for the Central Asian region.* Bordered by nuclear states and formidable regional powers, all of which have close historic and cultural ties with the region, Central Asia cannot depend for its security on any one of them without imperiling the security of all the others.

Thus, the long-term presence in the region of either American or Russian troops, alone or together, will not advance the long-term security of Central Asia. Nor will any other combination of outside forces achieve this end. This means that American forces should neither stay permanently in Central Asia nor leave quickly and permit the situation to revert to the *status ante quem*, with only Russian forces there.

The best and only alternative is for all external military forces to leave Central Asia. The same holds for Afghanistan which is, after all, the historic heart of the region. But this will not be easily achieved, since Russia and, at some future point, China or any of the other powerful neighbors, might aspire to fill what it perceives as a vacuum of power. The United States must therefore be prepared to keep its forces in the region until a comprehensive security structure is in place. That this is not only possible but likely is indicated by Secretary of State Powell's statement of 11 December that the U.S. intends to maintain a military presence in Central Asia for some time.

The simple notion underlying a workable long-term security structure should be "We will withdraw our troops from Central Asia but you must do the same, or not introduce your forces if they are not there now." The result will be a Central Asia without foreign forces.

Such a condition is not the first choice of any of the powerful neighbors. All, and especially Russia, would prefer, or at some future point aspire, to be the key player in the region. However, all would find an "all foreign forces out" arrangement to be their second choice, *provided the other neighboring powers and the United States agree to abide by the same understanding.*

This forms the basis for what in earlier times was called a "concert" of powers. The United States should take the lead in forging such a concert. It must include China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Turkey, as well as the United States and NATO.

To achieve such an understanding, the United States should initiate a dialogue with each of these states, leading to joint discussions of the entire group, and eventually to a formal agreement. Such an arrangement would not prevent the Central

Asian states or Afghanistan from participating in security links with any external powers, provided these do not include the introduction of foreign troops onto the territory of Central Asia and Afghanistan. After the concert is brought into being it would have to be maintained through a steady process of dialogue and meetings involving the participants and the Central Asian states themselves. Through such process, potential threats to the concert would be identified and addressed through joint action.

The exclusion of foreign troops from Central Asia and Afghanistan will not be easy. Only the United States is in a position to initiate it, by renouncing unilateralism on its own part on the condition that others renounce it as well. Whatever the difficulties of creating such a concert *it has the immense virtue of not being directed against any state or its interests.*

Politics: Openness Built on Security

The development of these security arrangements creates the essential precondition for political development in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Without exception, Central Asian governments have justified their concentration of power in the hands of the executive, the avoidance of elections, the retarded development of participatory government, and their curtailment of civil liberties in terms of national security. The establishment of an internationally protected security environment will remove this element as an overriding factor in domestic politics.

Under these circumstances, the United States and other open societies can reasonably propose that the Central Asian states take concrete steps towards establishing the rule of law and building democratic institutions on their territories. Expectations of greater openness must extend beyond domestic affairs to international relations within the region. The opening of borders, removal of onerous tariffs, and greater regional cooperation can then become practical objectives of U.S. policy and not merely declamatory goals promoted through fruitless hectoring, as has been the case for a decade.

None of this will be possible unless the Central Asian countries build military and security forces that are modern, adequate for their needs, and appropriate to open societies. The United States, together with other partners, should support this development within the framework of the security concert.

Economic Development to Support Open Societies in a Secure Environment

Both the security arrangements and political reforms suggested above will not survive without economic development. The deepest source of internal instability throughout the region is neither religious extremism nor ethnic conflict but poverty. Widespread throughout the region since Soviet times, poverty is particularly acute in the vast mountain zones defined by the Karakorum, Hindukush, Pamirs, Tienshan, Kohibaba, Alatau, and Altai ranges. It is no accident that these, rather than the steppe lands, have been the venue for most armed conflict in the area.

The most pressing needs of economic development are surprisingly simple: to enable Central Asians and Afghans to feed their families and create jobs for themselves and others. Until these are met there will be no end to opium production and drug trafficking. Until they are met there will be no peace in the region. This will not be accomplished through vast infrastructure projects or a Central Asian Marshall Plan. Instead, the focus should be on village level agriculture, the development of small businesses, and the removal of impediments to entrepreneurship at all levels.

Fortunately, projects already underway in the region are proving that these are attainable goals. The University of Central Asia being developed by the presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and the Aga Khan aspires to train a new generation of Central Asians who will lead economic development efforts in both the private and public sectors throughout the region. Many international organizations and NGOs have undertaken promising initiatives that foster the same ends. Rather than create new bureaucracies, American support should focus on these proven models, expanding and replicating them. The common key to their success is that they all work with, rather than on, the local communities, and build from the ground up rather than from the bureaucracies down.

A major impediment to economic development throughout the region is its isolation, which imposes a "distance tariff" on every raw material or product imported to, or exported from, Central Asia. Karachi is the region's nearest port, but for most of the twentieth century it has been closed to trade from Central Asia, first by the impassable southern border of the USSR and then by the chaos in Afghanistan. It is therefore urgently important to open up the ancient trade routes that link Central Asia and Afghanistan to their natural ports and trading partners to the South, whether in Pakistan, India, or Iran. The renewal of such commerce will not only

bring investment into Central Asia and Afghanistan but will soften the border tensions that are the heritage of half a century of conflict throughout this part of Asia.

An Attainable Future?

A skeptic might ask whether the policies suggested here have any realistic chance of success. In each area—security, political change, and economic development—the obstacles are real and must not be minimized. Yet to a significant degree they are offset by positive factors that are all too easily overlooked.

- None of these initiatives is directed against any state.
- None of the three initiatives calls for unilateral action by the United States. All are by their nature collaborative and hence share the risk.
- While all three areas require money, the expenditures are far less than the vast sums usually mentioned in connection with fanciful projects of “state building.”
- All build on the good will generated by the United States’ successful completion of the military phase of the war against terrorism in this region.
- While all three require sustained American attention to succeed, none leaves the United States with onerous and enduring military or financial obligations.
- Compared with the alternative—a renewed slide into poverty, authoritarianism, drug trafficking, and armed conflict—the cost in attention and money is modest.

Senator HAGEL. Dr. Starr, thank you.
Dr. Hill.

STATEMENT OF DR. FIONA HILL, FELLOW, FOREIGN POLICY STUDIES PROGRAM, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. HILL. Thank you, Senator Hagel. For my oral statement today, I am going to summarize my written testimony, and I would request that the full text be included in the hearing record.

Senator HAGEL. Your full text will be, as well as Dr. Starr’s.

Dr. HILL. Thank you very much.

Like Dr. Starr, I am going to keep my comments brief too so we can move on to your questions.

First of all, I wanted to state that the contributions of the Central Asian states to the U.S. campaign against terrorism and specifically to the current campaign in Afghanistan have been significant and unprecedented. As Dr. Starr said, the United States now has a broad opportunity to forge strong relationships with these states.

The Central Asian countries are positively disposed toward close relations with the United States. Over the last decade, they have been engaged, as we heard from Ambassador Jones, in a full range of U.S.-led assistance programs, and bilateral military relations and joint exercises with the Central Asian states have led to the close cooperation we see today in the campaign against terrorism.

The Central Asian states share the U.S. goals and concerns in Afghanistan. They seek to prevent the use of Afghan territory as a training and staging ground for terrorist groups and as a source of heroin production and trafficking. On this basis, the United States must now decide how and to what degree it wants to move forward and set priorities in its relations with the Central Asian states. So, I am going to single out three of these priorities in the context of the campaign in Afghanistan.

The first is ending the war in Afghanistan and eliminating the al-Qaeda network and Taliban leadership. And the United States will continue to need the cooperation and support of the Central Asian states to effect this. In particular, it will need access to bases, airports, and other facilities, as has already been offered.

The second is bringing long-term stability to Afghanistan. To avoid a resumption of civil war in Afghanistan, the United States and its allies will have to ensure that the Central Asian actors relinquish their ties to regional warlords and give their full support to the new central government in Kabul.

The third priority is draining the swamp that has produced and supported radical groups in Central and South Asia. The Central Asian states, particularly Tajikistan, have many of the same elements that facilitated the rise of the Taliban and the infiltration of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Without an approach that encompasses Central Asia, as well as Afghanistan, Taliban and al-Qaeda-like networks could emerge in Central Asia itself.

These three priorities point to the importance of long-term U.S. political and economic engagement in Central Asia even if the dynamic of the war against terrorism precludes long-term U.S. military presence and even if the United States must move on to deal with other targets.

But the United States faces many challenges in Central Asia, not least in dealing with its principal ally since September, Uzbekistan. President Karimov is currently engaged in efforts to extend his term in office, and Uzbekistan has been reluctant to open the Friendship Bridge at Termez to permit humanitarian shipments into Afghanistan without assurances of significant U.S. aid. Although Uzbekistan is the most strategically located of the Central Asian states, with the largest population and the most significant military capabilities, it is a problematic partner for the United States.

What I had said in my written testimony was that Uzbekistan is a source of regional tension. Let me stress I did not say instability. I said tension. So, it is a source of regional tension rather than stability.

Uzbekistan has disputes with all of its neighbors, and frankly it has become a log jam for regional economic development. Its position at the heart of Central Asia makes it indispensable to regional communications and trade. Tajikistan, for example, is almost wholly dependent on Uzbekistan for contacts with the outside world and it has seen its trade ruptured as the Uzbek Government has begun to fortify and mine its borders.

Allowing Uzbekistan to cutoff Tajikistan, which has already been the breeding ground for radical militant groups and a civil war, is particularly dangerous, especially if we want to avoid a repetition of the situation in Afghanistan.

Prior to the war in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan was criticized in the U.S. Government and Congress for well-documented human rights abuses and infringements of political and religious freedoms. Since the war began in Afghanistan, this criticism has been muted. In fact, it has almost been silenced.

And in 3 short months, President Karimov of Uzbekistan has been elevated from a Central Asian autocrat to a strategic partner of the United States. By leveraging his few assets of value to the United States, in this case bases and a bridge, he has extended his term and secured aid. I would argue that absent the war in Afghanistan, this would not have happened. In pursuit of the war in Afghanistan, the United States may have consolidated and bol-

stered another authoritarian and bankrupt regime in Central Asia and set back the prospects for regional development and stability.

I would like to underscore what Dr. Starr just said, that the United States needs to engage in Central Asia in a way that factors in all the Central Asian states rather than relying on one like Uzbekistan. In fact, it is the weakest states like Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan that need bolstering the most. And Turkmenistan that borders Iran and Afghanistan cannot be completely ignored. The Central Asian states are fragile and interdependent, and for future development, the connections between and among them must be restored. To stress again, if the United States does not engage Central Asia, then it also risks the failure of its efforts to ensure stability in Afghanistan.

So, in looking at the next steps for U.S. policy in Central Asia, we need to have some immediate, short-term and long-term goals. In the immediate term, we should not congratulate President Karimov on the extension of his Presidential term. The U.S. Government and Congress should continue to protest the infringements on rights and freedoms in Uzbekistan, and they should insist on movement toward political and economic reform, as Ambassador Jones outlined in her testimony.

We can only do this, though, if we are clear that we are engaged in Central Asia for the long haul, and that we will not simply move on in another 3 months' time. We need to demonstrate that we care about the future of Central Asia through more high-level visits to the region and movement on commitments for new programs in the Congress and the Government.

Now, again, in the immediate term, we should not rush to fund and initiate new security and military programs with Uzbekistan. This will simply facilitate the creation of "fortress Uzbekistan" and bolster its negative leverage with its neighbors. Pentagon programs for Uzbekistan, as well as for other Central Asian states, should be brought into line with State Department and other initiatives that emphasize internal development and regional cooperation not just security.

Again, in the short term, we should continue our engagement with all the other Central Asian states. For example, in the last several weeks, the U.S. Government has moved to develop a new relationship with Tajikistan, and Congress should support this to the fullest extent possible.

Also in the short term we need to foster realistic expectations on the part of Central Asian leaders about the extent and the kind of aid that will be forthcoming. The United States and other bilateral donors can provide significant funding, but they have serious limitations. All the Central Asian states have a low absorptive capacity for assistance. There are few actors to work with outside the central government and only a few successful development projects in the region which cannot always be easily replicated.

So, if we are to ensure stability in the long term, as Dr. Starr also suggested, we are going to need a systematic approach to regional development that fosters coordination among all programs and donors and one that begins right now. The United States has already taken the lead with Japan and the European Union to convene a series of donor conferences and coordination mechanisms for

Afghanistan. I recommend that we should employ a similar model for Central Asia. If we are to avoid its future Afghanization, Central Asia will require the same level of intensity and attention to detail that we are currently paying to Afghanistan.

Thanks for your attention, Senator Hagel.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Hill follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. FIONA HILL, FELLOW, FOREIGN POLICY STUDIES
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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAMPAIGN

The contributions of the Central Asian states to the U.S. campaign against terrorism and specifically to the current campaign in Afghanistan have been significant and unprecedented. This is a region in which the United States had no history of prior engagement before the collapse of the USSR in 1991, and which was viewed as firmly within the sphere of Russia's influence throughout the 1990s. At the end of 2001, we now have U.S. troops operating in the Central Asian heartland. Of the three states bordering Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have offered basing facilities for U.S. and allied forces, while Turkmenistan has offered logistical support and search and rescue provisions. All three have served as conduits for U.S. and other international humanitarian assistance to the population of Afghanistan. Along with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the states have provided over-flight rights and intelligence sharing. Kyrgyzstan's parliament has also recently voted to allow the United States and its allies to use its airports for military and humanitarian activities in Afghanistan for up to a year. Building upon this support from the last three months, the United States now has a broader opportunity to forge strong relationships in a critical strategic region of the globe where it has had few real allies.

The Central Asian states are positively disposed toward close relations with the United States. Over the last decade, they have been engaged in a full range of U.S.-led political, economic and military assistance and development programs. Bilateral U.S. military relations, joint exercises with Central Asian states, and a robust set of Pentagon special forces training programs for Uzbekistan since the mid-1990s, have clearly been translated into the close cooperation that we see today in the campaign in Afghanistan.

SHARED GOALS

In Afghanistan, the Central Asian states share U.S. concerns about instability and the use of the territory to their south as a training and staging ground for militant and terrorist groups. Central Asian states have suffered from their own problems with terrorism. Since the late 1990s, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have experienced raids and attacks by forces of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which became closely tied to the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2000-2001. Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have lent support to factions of the Northern Alliance in their struggle against the Taliban. Tajikistan, in particular, frequently served as a base for the forces of the assassinated Northern Alliance leader and ethnic Tajik, Ahmed Shah Masoud, and funneled supplies and weapons from Russia and other backers of the Alliance through its territory. Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, as immediate neighbors of Afghanistan, also played an active role in the United Nations-sponsored "6 + 2" process to find a negotiated settlement for the Afghan civil war. Kazakhstan, further to the north, initiated parallel efforts to find a solution to the conflict, pushing the U.N., the U.S. and other major international actors to maintain their focus on Afghanistan, and offering its territory and good auspices for peace talks among the various Afghan factions.

Looking to future reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, as the current campaign moves into a new military and political phase, the Central Asian states have important roles to play. They have close historical and trade links to Afghanistan and are part of Afghanistan's North-South communications axis stretching from Europe and Russia, to South Asia and the Indian subcontinent. In the Soviet period, this axis was dominated by flows of armaments and economic assistance from Moscow to Afghanistan. In the 1990s, the axis has been dominated by weapons flows south to the Northern Alliance from Russia, Uzbekistan and other states, and by drugs and armed militants flowing north into Central Asia from Afghanistan.

In the 1990s, Central Asia became the primary conduit for heroin trafficking from Afghanistan to Russia and from there to Eastern and Western Europe. This has spawned a huge intravenous drug use problem in Russia and Ukraine, and a public health disaster that is now approaching catastrophic proportions with the rapid in-

crease of HIV infection and AIDS, extending back along the drug routes themselves into Central Asia. Efforts by regional governments to tackle this problem have been stymied by the continuation of civil war in Afghanistan and direct linkages between regional militias and the drug trade. The states will welcome U.S. and international programs to eradicate heroin production and trafficking in Afghanistan as part of long-term reconstruction efforts, and the primary challenge in the coming years will be to transform this North-South axis into a route for licit rather than illicit trade. In this regard, Central Asia's energy resources may eventually come to play an important role. Projects for transporting gas from Turkmenistan and the broader Caspian Basin across Afghanistan to South Asia, which were stymied by the civil war in Afghanistan, could one day be revived in the context of a broader effort to restore and improve road, rail and other transportation and communication links.

Some projects are already underway in the region with financial assistance from the Asia Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Central Asian states have been engaged in organizations to promote broader regional cooperation and development. This includes initiatives sponsored by the European Union, trans-regional groups of other former Soviet republics extending to the Caucasus and the Black Sea, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which brings in Russia and China to resolve outstanding border and other disputes, promote trade, and combat terrorism. In the last two years, there have been several steps taken to set up counter-terrorism centers in the region, most recently in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, underscoring the commitment of the states to tackling regional issues.

Beyond its bilateral assistance programs and relations with individual states, the United States, to date, has not embarked on a more comprehensive effort in Central Asia and has not participated actively in regional organizations. In part, this was because prior to September 11, 2001, U.S. planners did not perceive a vital American interest in the broader region. The campaign against the Taliban and the al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan has provided that vital interest. The United States must now decide how, and to what degree, it wants to move forward and set priorities in its relations with the Central Asian states.

PRIORITIES FOR U.S. POLICY IN CENTRAL ASIA

I will single out three priorities in the context of the campaign in Afghanistan:

The first is ending the war in Afghanistan and eliminating the al-Qaeda network and the Taliban leadership. The U.S. will continue to need the cooperation and support of the Central Asian states to effect this. In particular, it will need access to bases, airports and other facilities.

The second is bringing long-term stability to Afghanistan, and here Central Asia plays an important role. The war may be over soon, but peace is by no means assured in Afghanistan. There are real short and long-term risks of a resumption of civil war. Other international experience and Afghanistan's own history suggest that the Taliban will be difficult to eradicate as a fighting force and political influence. Indeed, as we currently see in Afghanistan, many Taliban leaders and rank and file fighters have simply switched sides, reverting to their former "Afghan" rather than "Talib" identities. They have not necessarily shed their beliefs or commitment to a religiously based rather than secular society. Irrespective of the present agreements on the structure of a new government, support for a new project of state building will be thinly rooted and fragile. There will be little tolerance for inevitable mistakes unless there is some appreciable and immediate improvement in the lives of the general population.

In addition, many former Mujaheddin fighters and leaders linked with the Northern Alliance have been left out of the new interim government recently formed in Bonn. Some of these leaders, such as General Abdur Rashid Dostum, and former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, have considerable support in Central Asia. Uzbekistan has served as Dostum's patron, while Russia has supported Rabbani and other ethnic Tajik leaders, using Tajikistan as a base for contacts. Neither is likely to withdraw this support in the immediate future, thus bolstering their proxies in opposition to the new government and contributing to the fracturing of Afghan politics. This could be particularly difficult in the case of Dostum, who has been restored to power in his former regional stronghold in Mazar-e Sharif near the border with Uzbekistan. If Dostum's past conduct is anything to judge by, he will likely govern Mazar-e Sharif as his personal fiefdom, forging ties with Tashkent rather than Kabul, and encouraging the continued fragmentation rather than consolidation of the Afghan state. If stability is to be ensured in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Russia and other Central Asian actors will have to relinquish their ties to these old leaders and give their full support to the new government in Kabul.

The third priority—and closely linked to the second—is “draining the swamp” that has produced and supported radical militant groups in Central and South Asia. This is fostered by weak central government and the disintegration of state institutions, a collapsed economy, crushing poverty and the absence of a social safety net, high birthrates, high unemployment, poor and inadequate education, widespread illiteracy, the erosion of traditional social institutions and the infiltration of radical ideologies, free flows of drugs and illicit weapons, and isolation from all but the most immediate of neighbors. The Central Asian states, particularly Tajikistan, have many of the same elements that Afghanistan possessed in facilitating the rise of the Taliban and ultimately becoming a haven to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Without an approach to the reconstruction and development of the region that encompasses Central Asia as well as Afghanistan, we may simply see the shift of the current problems from the south to the north, and the emergence of Taliban and al-Qaeda-like movements in Central Asia itself.

The second and third priorities point to the importance of long-term U.S. political and economic engagement in Central Asia, even if the dynamic of the current war against terrorism precludes a long-term military presence as other networks outside the region are targeted and tackled.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES

In expanding and consolidating its relations with the Central Asian states, however, the U.S. faces some challenges—specifically to its long-term goals of promoting stability, market reform, and democratization in developing countries worldwide. Two recent incidents underscore this fact and should give pause for consideration of the current trajectory of U.S. strategy in Central Asia, which has emphasized close relations with Uzbekistan since September 2001.

First, on December 6, on the eve of Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to Uzbekistan this past weekend, Uzbekistan's parliament endorsed a proposal to extend President Islam Karimov's current term from 5 to 7 years and hold a referendum in January 2002 that could potentially have him declared “President for Life.” This will put Karimov on par with his neighbor, President Saparmurat Niyazov of Turkmenistan, who has devoted his life tenure to the restoration of an old-style Soviet personality cult and turned Turkmenistan into a Central Asian version of North Korea (minus the potential weapons of mass destruction).

Second, in spite of considerable pressure from the United States and international agencies, the Uzbek government dragged its feet for weeks on opening the Friendship Bridge at Termez to permit humanitarian shipments to cross into Afghanistan. Security concerns, including unsubstantiated reports of Taliban forces massing across the river, were accompanied by questions about the structural integrity of the bridge. But the real issue was the extent and nature of economic assistance that would be forthcoming to Uzbekistan from the United States. In late November a high-level Uzbek delegation visited Washington, DC to press their case, and it was only after the Uzbek leadership had been assured that there would be significant assistance—to the tune of a reported pledge of \$100 million—that approval was given for opening the bridge.

RISKS IN A CLOSE U.S.-UZBEKISTAN RELATIONSHIP

Uzbekistan may be the most strategically located of the Central Asian states, with the largest population and the most significant military capabilities and resources, but it is a problematic long-term partner for the United States in Central Asia. The increased emphasis on relations with Uzbekistan in Washington, DC since September is troubling.

Uzbekistan is a source of regional tension, rather than stability, and a logjam for regional development. It has water and territorial disputes with all of its neighbors. It has periodically used energy exports to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan as a lever to pressure their governments to make concessions in some of these disputes. It has begun to mine its borders to guard against militant incursions without consulting its neighbors, and has ruptured communication routes from Tajikistan, southern Kyrgyzstan and the sensitive Ferghana Valley that straddles the three countries. Uzbek mines have resulted in the death and injury of more than 50 people this year in Tajikistan alone. The casualties have been inhabitants of border regions visiting family or tending livestock, not members of radical forces.

Uzbekistan is also in perpetual domestic economic crisis. Indeed, crisis has become the status quo. Through a mixture of currency and exchange rate controls, state orders for its two main export commodities, cotton and wheat, and the good fortune of being self-sufficient in energy, Uzbekistan has muddled along for several years now, defying expectations of collapse and refusing to deregulate and open up

its economy. Its system is similar to the unreformed Soviet Union of the late 1980s, in stark contrast to neighboring Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. If the current trajectory continues, Uzbekistan will become a closed state like Turkmenistan.

While Turkmenistan's position on the periphery means it can effectively be avoided in regional projects, Uzbekistan's position at the heart of Central Asia makes it indispensable to regional communications and trade. While Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have access to Russia and China, Tajikistan is almost wholly dependent on Uzbekistan for contacts with the outside world. Over the last several years, Tajikistan's trade and communications with states beyond Uzbekistan have dwindled.

This is particularly dangerous. As stressed earlier, Tajikistan's situation is akin to that of Afghanistan. After 5 years of civil war (1992-1997), it has its own mix of extremely weak central government, and high levels of unemployment and impoverishment that facilitate the growth of radical forms of Islam that may provide ideological motivation for terrorist acts. Tajikistan has already been the breeding ground for its own radical militants, many of whom fled across the border to join the Taliban in Afghanistan at the end of the civil war, and has been the staging ground for the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Although the leadership and forces of that group seem to have been decimated in the course of the war against the Taliban, other groups may emerge. In northern Tajikistan, and across the border in southern Kyrgyzstan, clandestine Islamic movements such as Hezb-e-Tahrir have made considerable inroads among rural and urban youth alike, especially among the ethnic Uzbek population of the Ferghana Valley. They have stepped into the vacuum left by the collapse of secular political movements and by weak non-governmental organizations starved of resources.

Prior to September 11 and the war in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan was in a far different position in U.S. policy. The international NGO community had documented serious and persistent human rights abuses and infringements of political and religious freedoms and brought them to public and government attention. Although the U.S. had pledged increased military support for Uzbekistan—in light of the security concerns about Afghanistan and regional militant groups criticism of the Karimov regime had increased in the State Department and Congress. Since the war began in Afghanistan, this criticism has been muted—in fact, almost silenced.

In three short months, President Karimov of Uzbekistan has been elevated from the position of Central Asian autocrat to strategic partner of the United States and has been emboldened. By leveraging his few assets of value to the U.S. and its—international partners—bases and a bridge—he has extended his term and secured aid. Absent the war in Afghanistan, Karimov could not have expected to gain U.S. approval (tacit or otherwise) for violating democratic principles and extending his term, and there would have been no new infusion of economic assistance without evidence of a clear commitment to economic reform. Uzbekistan has made some token written commitment to reform in a November 30 Memorandum of Understanding between the two governments, but words are not easy to translate into action. In the pursuit of the war in Afghanistan, the United States may have consolidated and bolstered another authoritarian and bankrupt regime in Central Asia, and further set back the prospects for regional development and stability.

Uzbekistan's lack of commitment can be directly correlated to a lack of confidence in the United States' own commitment to a long-term presence in the region. In spite of the seeming new interest in Central Asia in the United States—underscored by the creation of this new Subcommittee on Central Asia and the South Caucasus in the Senate—the Central Asian states themselves are skeptical about future relations with the U.S. They have serious reservations about the nature and extent of any long-term U.S. presence in Afghanistan and the region, and already see U.S. government attention moving away as the military campaign in Afghanistan progresses more quickly than first anticipated.

Although U.S. officials have repeatedly asserted that there will be no repetition of the early 1990s when the U.S. disengaged from Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet forces, Central Asian states and other regional neighbors fully expect that the U.S. will disengage—or at the very best engage half-heartedly. They have been bolstered in this conviction by high level and public discussions of a shift in the war against terrorism to targets in the Middle East and elsewhere, statements that the United States will not lead the long-term political and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan, and assertions that the U.S. will cede the task to the United Nations and other international actors. The imperative to grab concessions when and while one can seems like a rational strategy for Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states given these considerations.

Central Asian perceptions and considerations aside, there are serious downsides for the United States in not engaging with all of the regional states consistently and

comprehensively. To stress, again, if the U.S. does not engage Central Asia then it also risks the failure of its efforts to ensure stability in Afghanistan.

The U.S. needs to engage in a way that factors in all the Central Asian states rather than relying on one, such as Uzbekistan, or two, including Kazakhstan, which has become an important U.S. partner in energy development in the Caspian Basin. In fact, the two weakest states, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, need bolstering the most, and Turkmenistan, bordering Iran and Afghanistan, can not be completely ignored.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE U.S. ENGAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

In looking at next steps for U.S. policy in Central Asia, we need to have some immediate, short-term and long-term goals. I will outline what some of these might be.

In the immediate term, we should not congratulate our new ally, Islam Karimov, on the extension of his presidential term—especially if this should last a lifetime. Most certainly any invitations to Karimov to make a formal visit to Washington should be reconsidered in the light of the January referendum on his presidency. The U.S. Government and Congress should continue to protest the infringements on rights and freedoms in Uzbekistan, as they did in 2000-2001, and insist on movement toward political and economic reform. Now more than ever, with clearly shared goals in Afghanistan, a new partnership and the promise of significant economic assistance, we should be able to do this—but only if we are clear that we are engaged in Central Asia for the long haul and will not simply move on in another 3 months time. We should demonstrate that we do care about the future of Uzbekistan and all of Central Asia. This will necessitate more high-level visits to the region and movement on commitments for new programs in Congress and the Government.

Again, in the immediate term, we should not rush to fund and initiate new security and military programs with Uzbekistan. An over-emphasis on Uzbekistan's external and border security and efforts to strengthen its military bases and forces will simply facilitate the creation of "fortress Uzbekistan" and bolster Uzbekistan's negative leverage with its neighbors. This could potentially encourage Tashkent to push the resolution of territorial and other disputes by force. Pentagon programs for Uzbekistan should be brought into line with State Department and other initiatives that emphasize internal development and regional cooperation as well as security.

In the short term, we should continue the engagement with the other Central Asian states that was also initiated in the 1990s, emphasizing U.S. relations with all regional actors. In the last several weeks, the U.S. Government has moved to develop a new relationship with Tajikistan—building on the military basing opportunities there, and close cooperation with Russia as the major guarantor of Tajik security. Although Secretary Powell did not include Tajikistan in his recent trip to Central Asia, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld did visit during his Central and South Asia trip in October. A renewed U.S. presence in Dushanbe is planned as is some kind of full official diplomatic representation for Tajikistan in the United States, which is currently absent because of a serious lack of funds. Congress should support the expansion of reciprocal U.S. and Tajik representation and presence to the fullest extent possible. Of all the Central Asian states, Tajikistan is the most receptive to U.S. and other international engagement and influence. The same factors of weak central government and a high degree of local autonomy and self reliance that offer opportunities for radical groups to exploit have also given rise to the most active civil society in Central Asia.

International aid agencies and NGOs working in Tajikistan consistently stress the possibilities for new and innovative programs that can be implemented with limited resources drawing on the relative freedom of speech and assembly beyond Dushanbe. This is in stark contrast to the frustration among international donors with the lack of similar opportunity in Uzbekistan. The IMF has ended its program in Uzbekistan and many international investors have also withdrawn. The remaining donors, such as the World Bank and the UNDP, carry out limited projects in a few areas such as health, agriculture, education, and the environment, including water management. The conclusion is that not much can be done in Uzbekistan beyond propping up the government in the absence of economic reform. The pressure on Uzbekistan to open its economy must continue, but obviously with a commitment from the U.S. and other international donors to provide financial and structural support for what will be a wrenching transition.

In the short term, we may also have to slow the pace of some of our preferred projects temporarily while an economic base and political space are created for change. For example, media projects favored by U.S. and other international donors

elsewhere in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union can not be realistically implemented in countries where leaders are presidents for life, where to criticize the president is treason, and where there is no capital basis for a functioning media market. Russia's free media is to Central Asia what the United States media is to Russia—that is, decades ahead in its development. So we will need to adjust our own expectations of what is possible, and resist the temptation to throw good money after bad projects as we sadly did so often elsewhere in the former Soviet Union in the 1990s.

We also need to foster realistic expectations on the part of regional leaders about the extent and kind of aid that will be forthcoming. The World Bank and the UNDP, for example, will have clearly defined but relatively limited roles to play in Central Asia. They will not provide huge infusions of cash. World Bank loans for projects eventually have to be repaid, and regional governments are cash-starved and already heavily indebted. While the UNDP tackles poverty alleviation, this can only be done through structural changes, multilevel projects in conjunction with other donors, and gradual, incremental steps over a long period of time.

The United States, other bilateral donors such as Japan (which is the largest single provider of overseas development assistance to the region), and the European Union and its individual member countries, can provide far more significant funding. But, here too, there are serious limitations. All the Central Asian states have a low absorptive capacity for assistance. There are few actors outside the central governments. Local governments are often corrupt and inept and lack the skills and budget revenues for self-governance. Non-governmental organizations are largely absent in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, or closely tied to the government where they exist. They are squeezed politically and starved of funds elsewhere in the region and dependent on foreign donors. Some significant successes have been achieved in assistance to private sector and business association development and microfinance programs for small businesses by USAID and the U.S. Eurasia Foundation, in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, but these can not be replicated easily in the closed economy of Uzbekistan or in isolated Tajikistan. Where governments have been constrained, private donors such as the Eurasia Foundation and the Open Society Institute have been able to develop very active small grantmaking programs across Central Asia, but they have made little headway in Turkmenistan and have seen their space for action shrink drastically in Uzbekistan over the last several years.

For the long-term, we will need a systematic approach to regional development that fosters coordination among programs and donors and plays to the respective strengths of individual organizations and states. The United States has already taken the lead with Japan and the European Union to convene a series of donor conferences and coordination mechanisms for Afghanistan. We should employ a similar model for Central Asia.

The region will require the same level of intensity and attention to detail if we are to avoid its future Afghanization.

Senator HAGEL. Doctor, thank you.

Let me ask each of you, in light of your testimony and your expertise in your areas, you have each, I suspect, formed some opinions on the temporary coalition government formed to govern Afghanistan for the next few months as the Loya Jirga is put into place and the democratic steps hopefully developed. I would be interested in each of your thoughts on that group of individuals and the likelihood of its success. Dr. Starr.

Dr. STARR. The Northern Alliance approached the negotiations with a winner-take-all attitude. The negotiations reduced their number of ministries from 20 to 15. They still dominate all the key sources of power. The Pashtun plurality of the south of the country has been busy in recent days with the last moments of Taliban rule. At a certain point, that will be past, and at that moment, it is going to be an open question whether they rise up against this power grab that took place in the north and with the U.S.'s support and, by the way, with the strong support of our friend, Mr. Putin.

Let us hope that the assurances that this is only an interim government, that there will be development aid coming down the road

and they will get a better shake when the real government comes into being will preserve calm in the country. But I do not think it is a balanced outcome.

Senator HAGEL. How could we have influenced that in your opinion to have had a different outcome?

Dr. STARR. You are asking me to be a Monday morning quarterback. I accept.

I think right from the beginning we should have been alert to Mr. Putin's complicated actions after September 11, when he did make, indeed, a very welcome public statement, but tried his best over several days to discourage Central Asian leaders from cooperating with the U.S. effort. He then did a 180 degree turn. We were pleased. His military was not. They said you have got to cooperate basically with what we have been up to for 10 years in Afghanistan and get behind this Northern Alliance.

A meeting was held in Dushanbe, planned the basic Northern Alliance approach. After that meeting, at which Mr. Putin was present, he announced that Mr. Rabbani of the Northern Alliance should be President of the whole country. Period.

Now, at that point, we should have spoken directly with him. Friendship with the Russians or with anyone else should open the door to candor and honesty. It should not be a barrier to speaking directly about things that are important. We failed to express ourselves clearly to them. We made general statements. Both the President and the Secretary of State repeatedly made general statements about this. These were all brushed aside.

Senator HAGEL. What in your opinion are the prospects for success in Afghanistan with the current arrangement and the current players?

Dr. STARR. It is interim. I think there are good grounds for thinking that a more balanced outcome will follow within 6 months. I think everyone is fatigued. That will discourage large scale return to fighting.

The interesting situation here is that Afghanistan is a land of small farmers. If, between now and the beginning of the planting season, the world community makes available to these small farmers the possibility of feeding their families, of making simple work for themselves and others back in their villages, they will take it. This is not rocket science. This is good seeds. This is a little help on pipes and so on and other equipment needed to rebuild simple mountainside irrigation systems. If we can convince the population that by the beginning of planting, that door will be open to them, you are going to see a dramatic upswing in the fate of Afghanistan.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Dr. Hill.

Dr. HILL. I would just like to add to what Dr. Starr said. As he indicated in the discussion about Russia, there are many actors around Afghanistan who over the years have developed their proxies in the country itself. If we are to see long-term stability, the United States and its allies in the European Union and beyond are going to have to put a lot of pressure on those other regional actors to cut those links with former leaders like Rabbani or like General Dostum in the northern part of Afghanistan, in Mazar-e Sharif. There is a real danger of continuing the fragmentation of the coun-

try, and a return to warlordism by some of these individuals who do not necessarily support the central government in Kabul. We are going to really have to put our full weight behind this to make it work and to keep people from trying to pull the strings of actors to influence events. In Dr. Starr's testimony, he also mentioned how all of the regional players want to have a say in what happens next in Afghanistan, but beyond that also in Central Asia. We are going to have to keep alert to this, and that does necessitate long-term engagement and not simply pulling back and letting things take their own course.

Senator HAGEL. What is your assessment of the long-term success? The same question I asked Dr. Starr.

Dr. HILL. I think it will only work if we do try to focus on opening up Afghanistan and forging links between Afghanistan and all the multi-poles that Afghanistan operates within. That means opening up the borders for full communications with Central Asia to the north, turning these axes of communications from north to south that have become conduits for drugs and other kinds of trafficking into real genuine trade routes with clear communications, the restoration of infrastructure, encouraging flows perhaps of energy or electricity, pushing Afghanistan's communication routes down to the south, opening its access to ports in Pakistan, and bringing in other regional players in the cooperative sense in terms of expanding trade and economic development. That means factoring in China, factoring in Iran, factoring in Pakistan and India.

And that may also necessitate changes in U.S. policy toward some of these regional players or at least certainly changes in the willingness to work with some of these regional players, even if it does not effect a major change in policy toward, say, Iran at this stage. We are going to have to start thinking of this as a fully integrated and larger region by not simply compartmentalizing our approach and focusing on Afghanistan, or focusing on Central Asia, or focusing on our South Asia policy. We really are going to have to bring people together to work very intensively on these issues.

Senator HAGEL. Then your feeling is what as to the possibility of success?

Dr. HILL. I think it is 50/50. If we really can open up Afghanistan to the outside world in a meaningful way, then I think we do have a good chance of success, if we can keep the pressure on these regional actors to stop meddling. But that will necessitate a great deal of time and energy on the part of the U.S. Government and that is why I say 50/50 because I am not convinced at this stage that the administration is really committed for the long term to undertake this exercise. We have heard statements from Ambassador Jones and certainly from Secretary of State Powell that suggests that we are committed. But if we do move on in the campaign against terrorism in ways that are suggested right now, obviously a good deal of our attention will be deflected and there will be pressure within the United States to turn our energies elsewhere. That is something that I am concerned about.

Senator HAGEL. Well, I think it is a legitimate question and concern. I think, however, the President, Secretary of State Powell, and others have made it very clear, at least in the statements that I have been aware of and conversations I have had with them, that

this is a long-term commitment, and certainly, if for no other reason, it would erode and probably extinguish all the commitment and resources that we have already applied and will continue to apply. We have an investment there, if you look at it from that perspective.

Dr. Starr.

Dr. STARR. If I can say, this is a remarkable process we are engaged in. So far, it has been carried out with, I think, astonishing brilliance. But I have the feeling that at this moment, as we look at the region under your subcommittee's purview, including though Afghanistan more broadly, the historic region of Central Asia, that the upside gains that could potentially derive from this activity are just vastly greater than we have acknowledged. The payoff could be much, much bigger. We have approached this problem in terms of damage control. Gosh, we have drugs, we have terrorism. If we can get back to zero, we will all be happy. We would go home. That is way off the mark, it seems to me.

If there is a stable Afghanistan—it is an attainable goal—if the transport routes in this great region are reopened—it is attainable goal—if therefore you have a development process beginning that turns Pakistan around, instead of being the end of the road, it is as the region has always been, a linchpin of huge continental trade, if all that happens, what will take place?

Suddenly Central Asia will become a solid and stable place whose leaders do not feel compelled to take these exceptional security measures that we are so displeased with. Afghanistan will have alternatives to the drug production. Europe will have to, perhaps, produce its own or find another source.

But much more important, trade from east to west from India through Pakistan, Afghanistan to Iran will revive, helping all those countries, softening their relationships with each other, moving toward a solution of the Kashmir problem, giving in short to this largely Muslim region the character of a success story of moderate Muslim secular states. This is all attainable, and it is a lack of imagination or willingness to settle for less that is our greatest enemy at this point.

Senator HAGEL. Dr. Starr, I appreciate your comments. And I apologize because I am going to have to adjourn this subcommittee meeting. I have been told here that we are starting a series of votes, and I have no alternative.

But to very quickly respond to your comment, I cannot speak for the administration, nor would I try, but I think the administration is in fact committed to the kind of long-term scenario/objective that you have laid out, as well as Dr. Hill. This will not be easy, as you both know so well and certainly Secretary Jones laid out. But I think many of us do believe that that long-term commitment from the President, Secretary of State Powell, and others is there, and we are going to do everything we can to assist them with that. You also both know there will be bumps along the way and there will be mistakes made and there will be more mistakes.

But this is one of those areas, as you both have clearly articulated, that we cannot afford to defer any decisions here. Much of the world stability and the future of the world is cradled in this part of the world. Obviously, this is why we have put together this

subcommittee to put the appropriate kind of attention to it that it needs, and your testimony, each of you, has helped us get there.

I apologize. We could go on for hours. And I am only sorry my colleagues were not here to hear this, but they will get your testimony. It will be included in the record and they will get transcripts of our exchange. So, thank you both very much, and I look forward to seeing you both again.

Dr. STARR. Thank you very much.

Dr. HILL. Thank you.

Senator HAGEL. The subcommittee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:36 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

